

First Presbyterian Church



Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 10, 2024



700 Wood Street, Clarion, PA 16214

814-226-8145

churchoffice@clarionfirstpresby.org

www.clarionfirstpresby.org

We come together to worship, grow, and serve as disciples of Christ.

We Gather in God's Name

(Tune your car radio to 88.7 FM)

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Welcome and Announcements

Lector, Kathy Larimer

We silently shift our focus to God and prepare to worship.

Prelude

Andante from: Symphony No. 6

Tchaikovsky, arr. Mansfield

Chiming of the Trinity

Introit

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Capers/arr. Friesen-Carper

Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in **bold**.

Call to Worship

We enter into worship together, reflections of God's glory.

Inspired by God's presence, we gather to join in praise.

In joy, we lift our voices.

With adoration, we express our gratitude.

✦ When this symbol precedes an element of the service, please rise in body or spirit.

✦ Hymn No. 14

For the Beauty of the Earth

✦ Call to Confession

How do we know when our actions are right? When the fruit of our labors are good and true. Christ is the light that exposes all we keep hidden, but offers us healing and renewal instead of judgment. Therefore, let us hold up our sin to Christ's gaze.

✦ Prayer of Confession (Unison)

By the gift of your grace we are saved, O God, from all that separates us from you. Still, we would rather believe that we can earn your love. Still, we would rather believe that we are in ultimate control. Forgive us when we do not recognize the radical gift of your grace; have mercy when we fail or refuse to share that grace with one another. Forgive us, O God, and wash us in your mercy. Forgive us, O God, and free us to try again. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

✦ Declaration of Forgiveness

Jesus restores our souls and leads us in right paths for his name's sake. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives, and we will dwell in the house of the Lord our whole lives long.

Friends, believe the Good News:

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

GLORIA PATRI
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen

✦ Gloria Patri

We Share God's Word

Time with the Children

Debra Owens

Prayer of Illumination

Kathy Larimer

First Scripture

John 3:14-21

(p. 94)

Second Scripture

Numbers 21:4-9

(p. 139)

The words of scripture, inspired by God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

“Look At The Cross”

Rev. Rebecca Mihm

Organ Interlude

✠ Hymn No. 223

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

We Give Thanks to God

✠ Affirmation of Faith

Adapted from the Confession of 1967, 9.31

To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as God’s reconciling community. This community, the church universal, is entrusted with God’s message of reconciliation and shares God’s labor of healing the enmities which separate people from God and from each other. Christ has called the church to his mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit. The church maintains continuity with the apostles and with Israel by faithful obedience to his call.

Call for the Offering

Offering and Offertory

Pie Jesu

Robert H. McIver

✠ Doxology

✠ Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer

We Go Forth to Serve

✠ Hymn No. 213

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

✠ Charge and Benediction

Postlude

Renew Us

Gail Coon

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DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Please remember at the close of the service, the Postlude is a time to silently reflect on God and the mission to which we are called. We ask that you please remain silent and seated until the music has ended.

WELCOME VISITORS

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church. We are glad to provide hybrid and virtual worship services for this Sunday. Services are currently livestreamed on our Facebook page (First Presbyterian Church of Clarion) in real time, then archived to our website and Facebook page.

At First Presbyterian Church our mission is to worship, grow, and serve as followers of Jesus. From our youngest to our oldest, we seek to worship God in our actions, grow in God's love, and serve God's people in our community and around the world. We hope that you will come join us so we may personally extend a warm welcome. If you have any questions or particular prayer needs, please feel free to contact the church office at 226-8145 between 9 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday.

For more information visit our website at www.clarionfirstpresby.org.

Find us on Facebook! (First Presbyterian Church of Clarion)

Radio Broadcast-WWCH 94.1 FM every third Sunday of the month at 11:00 a.m.

Video recordings of past sermons may be viewed by clicking the "Worship" link on our home page at www.clarionfirstpresby.org or a phone app is available at sermon.net (look for First Presbyterian Church—Clarion.) You can also choose to listen to an audio version. Simply pick the option that works best for you. Videos of Sunday worship are also posted on our Facebook page (see above).

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CHURCH STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

Pastor: Rev. Rebecca Mihm
Organist: Jean Mitrosky
Director of Music: Bonnie Champion
Treasurer: Brenda Nesbitt
Secretary: Debra Owens
Sexton: Mike Hetrick
Sound Engineer: Josh Deitz
Video Engineer: Dan Willy

Ruling Elders:

<u>Class of 2024:</u>	<u>Class of 2025:</u>	<u>Class of 2026:</u>
Kathy Larimer	Jeff Deitz	Norma Kooman
Elaine Matticks	Jeff Kapp	Dave Larimer
Pam Reid	Kurt Nesbitt	Cindy Stants

Deacons:

<u>Class of 2024:</u>	<u>Class of 2025:</u>	<u>Class of 2026:</u>
Bonnie Champion	Kim Lewis	Robin Cable
Marianne Reynolds	Lee Seitz	Tamalyn Goble
Mary Swanger	Lori Smith	Joey Kunselman

WORSHIP NOTES

Pastor: Rev. Rebecca Mihm
Lector: Kathy Larimer
Time with Children: Debra Owens
Director of Music: Bonnie Champion
Organist: Jean Mitrosky
Sound Engineer: Josh Deitz/Jeff Kapp
Video Engineer: Dan Willy/Kurt Nesbitt
Acolytes: Gavin Kunselman, Clara Stants, Jeremy Willy
Ushers in Charge: Lee Seitz, Mary Swanger, Amy Widmer

The Sanctuary flowers today are given to the glory of God, and in memory of my Zachary Botzer, by Norma Kooman.

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

9:30 a.m.	Choir Practice
10:00 a.m.	Worship
11:00 a.m.	Sunday School
11:00 a.m.	Confirmation Class
11:00 a.m.	Choir Practice

WEEKLY DEPOSIT SUMMARY

3/3/2024

Weekly Contributions

Envelope Contributions	\$3,285.00
Miscellaneous Cash Contributions	\$103.00
Per Capita	\$112.40
Total Contributions	\$3,500.40

Weekly Donations

Food Bags	\$675.00
Blessing Box	\$300.00
Men's Fellowship	\$120.00
Easter Flowers	\$54.00
Christian Education	\$25.00
OGHS	\$25.00
Total	\$1,199.00
Total	\$4,699.40

NOTES:

THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBY

Monday, March 11

6:00 p.m. Mission Team, Ministry Central
7:00 pm Worship Team, Chapel

Tuesday, March 12

6:00 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous, Step Down Room

Wednesday, March 13

7:00 pm Evening Circle, Cindy Stants' home
8:00 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous, Step Down Room

Thursday, March 14

12:00 p.m. Afternoon Circle, Chapel
2:00 p.m. Food Bag Distribution
5:00 p.m. Echoes of Joy Practice
6:00 p.m. Joyful Bells Practice

Saturday, March 16

8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Breakfast, Social Hall

Next Sunday, March 17 Fifth Sunday of Lent

9:30 a.m. Choir Practice
10:00 a.m. Worship
11:00 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Confirmation Class
11:00 a.m. Choir Practice

PRAYER LIST

Ruth Ann Minnich	Mason Martin and family
Randy Cable	Angelo Gehenio
Margy Port	Jerri Reddinger
Don McCord	Joe Amato
Rick Goble	Tom Minich
Robin Cable	Rob Summerville
All our homebound members	<u>Bereaved</u>
Mary Biser	Louise Swarm Family
Charlotte Hartman	Doris Mintz Family
Kenneth Daugherty, Jr.	<u>Around the World</u>
Ben McKinley	Everyone serving in the US Military
David Mahle	
Laurie Dickey	Gitwe Congregation in Rwanda, our faith partners
Rebecca Irwin	
Anthony Louder	<u>Homebound Member of the Week</u>
Pat Hargest	
Michael McConnell	
Alice Davis	Ellen Fulton
Alexandra Sharrar	Clarion Healthcare & Rehab
Dr. Shannon Penland	999 Heidrick Street
Mary Kay Arth	Clarion, PA 16214
Kay Fye	
Tracey & Jody Hall	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Easter Flowers sale ends today! If you would like to order flowers for our Sanctuary Easter morning, order forms are available in the Ramp Room. They can be returned to the church office or the offering plate with your payment.

The First United Methodist Church of Clarion invites you to join them for a "Lenten Lunch" on Tuesday, March 19. It starts with devotions at 12:00 p.m., followed by lunch at 12:15 p.m. Salad, sandwiches, and dessert will be provided. Please call (814) 226-6660 to RSVP by March 10 so they can plan appropriately for the lunch.

Men's Fellowship Breakfast is this Saturday, March 16th, at 8:00 a.m. in the Social Hall. Elaine Matticks, our guest speaker, will talk about our church's Food Bag Ministry.

Holy Moments: A Program for Hope. The Lent adult study class meets on Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m. in the Sunday School room. We will focus on the book Holy Moments: A Handbook for the Rest of Your Life, by Matthew Kelly. We are hoping for a good turnout. If you plan to participate, please call Jim or Pat McConnell at 814-229-0168, or Deb Owens at the church office 814-226-8145.

Want to learn about the meal when Jesus introduced the Lord's Supper? Want to see how the Jewish people celebrate Passover? Want to spend an evening of fellowship with the Body of Christ? Join us for a Seder dinner on Thursday, 3/28, at 6 p.m. Sign-up in the Ramp Room is required. Bring a dish.

One Great Hour of Sharing turns 75! For 75 years, One Great Hour of Sharing has connected us in God's healing, tending and growing to create a world where all needs are met. Repairing the breach, providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry and support for the poor and oppressed, your gifts are shared with the ministries of the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Self-Development of People and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. You may give through Palm Sunday. To learn more about how your gift makes a difference visit pcusa.org/oghs.

Roma Kline & Wayne L. Fulton Scholarship Fund applications are available in the church office and on the Resources page of our website. The deadline to apply is March 31.

Mission's Coat Project continues. The coat rack is on the walkway between the Ramp Room and the CE Building. Coats hung on the rack are for anyone who needs a coat. If you need a coat, please take one. If you have a coat or two that are new or still in great shape, hang them on the rack so someone else may be blessed with their warmth. New or gently-used boots are also needed.



MARCH 10, 2024
FOURTH SUNDAY
IN LENT

taking
faith
home

God is rich in mercy.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 3:14-21	God so loved the world
Monday	Numbers 21:4-9	The serpent of bronze
Tuesday	Ephesians 2:1-10	Faith is a gift from God
Wednesday	Romans 9:6-18	God's choice of Israel
Thursday	Isaiah 30:18-22	God's promise to Zion
Friday	Titus 3:1-8	Maintain good deeds
Saturday	Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22	Thanksgiving for deliverance
Sunday	John 12:20-33	The hour has come

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.
Ephesians 2:4-5 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of mercy, your love for us is more than we deserve but all that we need and want through Jesus Christ, your Son who came to give us eternal life. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, your kindness to us is everlasting; we thank you for your daily love for us that includes this gift of food. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the mercy of God be your everlasting joy.

MARCH 10, 2024
HYMN OF THE WEEK

*There's a Wilderness in
God's Mercy*

taking
faith
home

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When is a time you needed to ask for help with something because you could not do it alone?
- A relationship with God is a gift that only God can give us. How is this a challenge to our desire to control our own destiny?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Ephesians 2:1-10.

These verses are packed with powerful themes, some of which pose a challenge to make-it-on-your-own individualism and flawed self-confidence. Ephesians points out that 1) we were spiritually dead because of our brokenness, 2) our misguided passions for pleasure lead us away from God, 3) only God's mercy, grace, and love can intervene to renew our lives in Christ, and 4) God's intervention gives us a new and God-focused passion to do good works, not to earn anything but to simply live as we were created to be. Once we get beyond a sense of making it on our own in life—including making it spiritually with God—we are set free to experience lives that "God prepared beforehand to be our way of life" (v. 10). God's nature is love and mercy. In the language of Psalm 107:1, God is good and God's "steadfast love endures forever." Similarly, Ephesians 2:8 summarizes much of our biblical faith: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God."

Discuss: How does God's mercy and grace make a difference in your daily life?

Pray: Almighty and merciful God, we thank you for your love that never ceases to reach out to us with your saving grace through Jesus Christ. Amen.

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you show love and mercy to someone who is hurting?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The cross is an ancient symbol of the Christian faith. It reminds us Jesus died that we may live with God forever and is a reminder of a way of life for Jesus' followers. Light four candles of the seven votive candles shaped like a cross being used for Lent. Sit in silence for a moment while looking at the cross.

Then pray: Merciful God, we thank you for your love for us that calls us out of darkness and into the light of Christ so that we may not perish but have eternal life. Amen. (John 3:16)